

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for electronic shopping, comprising:
2 receiving an instruction to associate an item with an electronic shopping cart; and
3 in response to the instruction, determining that the item is not allowed to be
4 associated with the electronic shopping cart.

1 2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the determination is based on rules.

1 3. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the instruction is received from a
2 consumer, and wherein the rules are defined at least in part by at least one of: a spouse of
3 the consumer; a parent of the consumer; a law enforcement agency; a government entity;
4 a legal guardian; an account holder; a credit card account holder; a co-signer on a credit
5 card; a service bureau; a credit card company; a designated third party; a merchant; and
6 an intelligent software agent.

1 4. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 a price of the item.

1 5. A method according to Claim 4, wherein the rules comprise a rule specifying
2 that a price of all items in the shopping cart may not exceed a specified total price.

1 6. A method according to Claim 4, wherein the rules comprise a rule specifying
2 that a price of any one item in the shopping cart may not exceed a specified price.

1 7. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 a type of the item.

1 8. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 a number of items in the shopping cart.

1 9. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 whether other particular items are associated with the shopping cart.

1 10. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules require approval from at
2 least one entity.

1 11. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 one of: the item; a profile of a consumer from whom the instruction was received; and a
3 profile of an entity responsible for the consumer.

1 12. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 a financial status of a consumer from whom the instruction was received.

1 13. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 a demographic of a consumer from whom the instruction was received.

1 14. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 a rating of a consumer from whom the instruction was received.

1 15. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 preferences of an entity responsible for a consumer from whom the instruction was
3 received.

1 16. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are at least one of: fuzzy;
2 conditional; time-dependent; statistical; stochastic; and based on an aggregate of other
3 rules associated with one or more consumers.

1 17. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 nutritional and health properties of the item.

1 18. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are based at least in part on
2 prior purchases.

1 19. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rules are dynamically modified
2 based on information from an external database.

1 20. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the instruction is received from a
2 consumer, and wherein the determining step comprises:
3 determining whether approval of the association has been received from at least
4 one of: a spouse of the consumer, a parent of the consumer; a law enforcement agency; a
5 government entity; a legal guardian; an account holder; a credit card account holder; a co-
6 signer on a credit card; a service bureau; a credit card company; a designated third party;
7 a merchant; and an intelligent software agent.

1 21. A method according to Claim 20, wherein the step of determining whether
2 approval of the association has been received is not performed for all items.

1 22. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:
2 notifying an entity of receipt of the instruction.

1 23. A method according to Claim 22, wherein the entity is a service bureau.

1 24. A method according to Claim 22, wherein the entity is at least one of: a
2 spouse of the consumer, a parent of the consumer; a law enforcement agency; a
3 government entity; a legal guardian; an account holder; a credit card account holder; a co-

4 signer on a credit card; a service bureau; a credit card company; a designated third party;
5 a merchant; and an intelligent software agent.

1 25. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:
2 presenting a second item for associating with the electronic shopping cart.

1 26. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:
2 in response to the instruction, associating a second item with the electronic
3 shopping cart.

1 27. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:
2 receiving an instruction to disassociate a second item from the shopping cart; and
3 indicating that the second item is not allowed to be disassociated from the
4 shopping cart.

1 28. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:
2 associating items associated with the electronic shopping cart with a second
3 electronic shopping cart.

1 29. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the item comprises at least one of:
2 merchandise; stocks; bonds; services; promises; and knowledge.

1 30. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:
2 indicating that the item is not allowed to be associated with the electronic
3 shopping cart.

1 31. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:

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2 presenting the electronic shopping cart including a representation of the item, the
3 representation indicating that the item is not allowed to be associated with the electronic
4 shopping cart.

1 32. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:
2 presenting the electronic shopping cart including a representation of the item, the
3 representation indicating that approval for the item is pending.

1 33. A method according to Claim 32, further comprising:
2 receiving approval for the item; and
3 presenting the electronic shopping cart including a second representation of the
4 item, the second representation indicating that the item is allowed to be associated with
5 the electronic shopping cart.

1 34. A method for electronic shopping, comprising:
2 issuing an instruction to associate an item with an electronic shopping cart; and
3 in response to the instruction, receiving an indication that the item is not allowed
4 to be associated with the electronic shopping cart.

1 35. A medium storing processor-executable process steps, the process steps
2 comprising:
3 a step to receive an instruction to associate an item with an electronic shopping
4 cart; and
5 in response to the instruction, a step to determine that the item is not allowed to be
6 associated with the electronic shopping cart.

1 36. A medium according to Claim 35, wherein the determination is based on
2 rules.

1 37. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the instruction is received from a
2 consumer, and wherein the rules are defined at least in part by at least one of: a spouse of
3 the consumer; a parent of the consumer; a law enforcement agency; a government entity;
4 a legal guardian; an account holder; a credit card account holder; a co-signer on a credit
5 card; a service bureau; a credit card company; a designated third party; a merchant; and
6 an intelligent software agent.

1 38. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on a price of the item.

1 39. A medium according to Claim 38, wherein the rules comprise a rule
2 specifying that a price of all items in the shopping cart may not exceed a specified total
3 price.

1 40. A medium according to Claim 38, wherein the rules comprise a rule
2 specifying that a price of any one item in the shopping cart may not exceed a specified
3 price.

1 41. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on a type of the item.

1 42. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on a number of items in the shopping cart.

1 43. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on whether other particular items are associated with the shopping cart.

1 44. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules require approval from at
2 least one entity.

1 45. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on one of: the item; a profile of a consumer from whom the instruction was received; and
3 a profile of an entity responsible for the consumer.

1 46. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on a financial status of a consumer from whom the instruction was received.

1 47. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on a demographic of a consumer from whom the instruction was received.

1 48. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on a rating of a consumer from whom the instruction was received.

1 49. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on preferences of an entity responsible for a consumer from whom the instruction was
3 received.

1 50. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are at least one of: fuzzy;
2 conditional; time-dependent; statistical; stochastic; and based on an aggregate of other
3 rules associated with one or more consumers.

1 51. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on nutritional and health properties of the item.

1 52. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are based at least in part
2 on prior purchases.

1 53. A medium according to Claim 36, wherein the rules are dynamically
2 modified based on information from an external database.

1 54. A medium according to Claim 35, the process steps further comprising:
2 a step to present the electronic shopping cart including a representation of the
3 item, the representation indicating that the item is not allowed to be associated with the
4 electronic shopping cart.

1 55. A medium according to Claim 35, the process steps further comprising:
2 a step to present the electronic shopping cart including a representation of the
3 item, the representation indicating that approval for the item is pending.

1 56. A medium according to Claim 55, the process steps further comprising:
2 a step to receive approval for the item; and
3 a step to present the electronic shopping cart including a second representation of
4 the item, the second representation indicating that the item is allowed to be associated
5 with the electronic shopping cart.

1 57. A medium storing processor-executable process steps, the process steps
2 comprising:
3 a step to issue an instruction to associate an item with an electronic shopping cart;
4 and
5 in response to the instruction, a step to receive an indication that the item is not
6 allowed to be associated with the electronic shopping cart.

1 58. An apparatus for electronic shopping, comprising:
2 a processor; and
3 a storage device in communication with the processor and storing instructions
4 adapted to be executed by the processor to:
5 receive an instruction to associate an item with an electronic shopping cart; and
6 in response to the instruction, determine that the item is not allowed to be
7 associated with the electronic shopping cart.

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- 1 59. An apparatus for electronic shopping, comprising:
2 a processor; and
3 a storage device in communication with the processor and storing instructions
4 adapted to be executed by the processor to:
5 issue an instruction to associate an item with an electronic shopping cart; and
6 in response to the instruction, receive an indication that the item is not allowed to
7 be associated with the electronic shopping cart.

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